

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AORG, UN

SUBJECT: US VOTE ON SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES

REF: USUN 6348

1. USDEL ABSTAINED IN THE DECEMBER 1976 VOTE BY 31ST UNGA (A/RES/31/207) ON \$38.1 MILLION APPROPRIATIONS AS SUPPLEMENT TO \$745.8 MILLION VOTED BY THE 30TH UNGA FOR THE 1976-77 BIENNIAL. WE ALSO HAD ABSTAINED WHEN THE BIENNIAL BUDGET WAS APPROVED AT THE 30TH UNGA. IN THE VOTE ON THE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION, WE AGAIN FOUND OURSELVES ON A MIDDLE GROUND, WITH THE SOVIET BLOC OPPOSED AND WITH ALL OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES AS WELL AS ALL LDCS VOTING YES. A NEGATIVE VOTE ON THE BUDGET WOULD HAVE BEEN UNPRECEDENTED FOR THE US AND WOULD HAVE BEEN A STILL STRONGER SIGN OF OUR DISPLEASURE WITH SECRETARIAT MANAGEMENT OF ITS FINANCIAL AFFAIRS. HOWEVER, OUR ABSTENTION, DIVERGING AS IT DID FROM THE VAST MAJORITY, DOES SIGNAL OUR CONTINUING DEEP CONCERN OVER UN BUDGETARY MATTERS.

2. IN USDEL'S VIEW, ABSTENTION WAS THE WISEST COURSE OF ACTION IN VIEW OF ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES, WHICH INCLUDED:

A. OUR VOTES IN FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE SESSION ON THE COMPONENT PARTS OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY REQUEST

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WERE A MIXTURE OF YESES, NOES, AND ABSTENTIONS. HOWEVER, THE YESES PREDOMINATED AND INCLUDED SOME OF THE MORE COSTLY ITEMS SUCH AS DECISIONS OF ECOSOC AT ITS 60 AND 61 SESSIONS; SALARY ADJUSTMENTS GROWING OUT OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ICSC; SERVICING FOR THIRD CONFERENCE ON THE LAW OF THE SEA, CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND CONFERENCE ON TCDC; AND ELECTRONIC

DATA PROCESSING. SOME OF THESE ITEMS AND OTHER ENTAILING EXPENDITURE OF NEW FUNDS ARE LINKED TO CONSCIOUS DECISIONS ON CARRYING OUT US POLICY OBJECTIVES AT THE UN. HAVING VOTED AS WE DID NOT THE COMPONENT PARTS, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN INCONSISTENT AND ILLOGICAL TO HAVE VOTED AGAINST THE SUPPLEMENTARY AS A WHOLE. WE COULD HAVE CHOSEN EARLIER TO DO AS THE SOVIETS DID; I.E., HAMMER HOME ON EVERY REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS THE POINT THAT THE NEW AND/OR ADDITIONAL WORK COULD BE CARRIED OUT BY REALLOCATION OF EXISTING RESOURCES, AND THEN VOTE AGAINST EACH PROPOSAL FOR SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDS. HOWEVER, FOR GOOD REASONS WE DID NOT DO SO AND AN ABSTENTION RATHER THAN EITHER POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE VOTE ON THE SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET REQUEST WAS A LOGICAL COROLLARY.

2. WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS THE REDUCTIONS MADE BY THE ACABQ FROM REQUESTS BY THE SYG WERE SUSTAINED BY THE FIFTH COMMITTEE. DOLLARWISE, THE SYG PROPOSED A TOTAL SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION OF \$48.6 MILLION, AND THE ACABQ RECOMMENDED REDUCING THIS BY \$11.5 MILLION OR TO A BUDGET REQUEST OF \$37.1 MILLION. HOWEVER, THE FIFTH COMMITTEE RESTORED \$1.1 MILLION OF THE ACABQ REDUCTIONS (FOR TNC, UNCTAD, DISARMAMENT, AND REFURBISHING OF THE UNGA PLENARY HALL) WHICH RESULTED IN A \$10.4 MILLION REDUCTION BY THE FIFTH COMMITTEE/PLENARY AND THE APPROVED SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION OF \$38.1 MILLION. THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN A MORE COMPELLING CASE FOR A US NEGATIVE VOTE IF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE HAD YIELDED WHOLESALE TO SECRETARIAT OR DELEGATIONS PRESSURES AND RESTORED MORE OF THE FUNDS CUT BY ACABQ.

C. OUR ABSTENTION WAS UNDERSTANDABLE TO OUR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WESTERN ALLIES AND FRIENDS, WHEREAS A NEGATIVE VOTE WOULD HAVE BRANDED US AS A COMPLETE HARDLINER ALONG WITH THE SOVIET AND HAMPERED OUT EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN UNITY WITH OUR FRIENDS IN THE FUTURE ON BUDGETARY QUESTIONS. SOME ALLIES (E.G., JAPAN), WOULD HAVE PREFERRED TO ABSTAIN THIS TIME, BUT IN THE CASE OF THE EC-9 THE DESIRE FOR A COMMON POSITION PREVAILLED AND THEY ALL VOTED FOR THE BUDGET. COUNTRIES SUCH AS THE UK, FRG, AND JAPAN, WHICH ARE EXTREMELY TOUGH ON BUDGETARY MATTERS, TOLD US BEFORE-HAND THEY BELIEVED THIS WAS SIMPLY NOT THE RIGHT ISSUES, TIME AND PLACE TO CAST A VOTE TO REJECT THE REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS.

D. UNLESS THERE IS A GOOD REASON FOR DOING SO AND SIMPLY TO CUT FOR ITS OWN SAKE IS NOT A JUSTIFIABLE REASON --WE DO NOT CONSIDER IT TO BE IN THE US INTEREST FOR US TO BE THE ONLY WESTERN COUNTRY TO JOIN WITH THE SOVIETS AND THEIR ALLIES IN HABITUALLY CASTING NEGATIVE VOTES ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS. OUR ENTIRE APPROACH TO THE UN IS DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THE SOVIETS, AND IT IS VITALLY IMPORTANT

TO OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER DELEGATIONS -- ESPECIALLY THE  
LDCS -- THAT THE DISINCTION BETWEEN THE POLICIES OF THE TWO  
SUPERPOWERS TOWARD THE UN NOT BE BLURRED.

3. IT SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND THAT DURING 1976 THE US  
BROUGHT HEAVY PRESSURE IN PRIVATE DEMARCHES TO SYG WALDHEIM  
-- IN CONCERT WITH THE UK, FRG, FRANCE, AND JAPAN -- TO EXERCISE  
GREATER RESTRAINT IN FUTURE BUDGETARY REQUESTS. WE PLAN TO CON-  
TINUE THESE EFFORTS AND URGE OUR FRIENDS TO DO LIKEWISE. THE  
FORCEFUL STATEMENTS MADE BOTH BY THE US AND OTHER WESTERN  
DELEGATIONS PLENARY AND IN THE FIFTH COMMITTEE ARE VERY MUCH  
IN LINE WITH OUR PRIVATE DEMARCHES; THEY REINFORCE THEM AND  
HELP BUILD A FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE ONES. CERTAINLY NO SIGNAL  
OF INDULGENCE HAS BEEN GIVEN BY THE WEST AND PARTICULARLY NOT  
BY THE US.

4. AT THE SAME TIME WE KNOW THE PRESENT ACTORS AND THE SYSTEM  
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HERE WELL ENOUGH TO REALIZE THAT IDENTIFYING AND ELIMINATING  
MARGINAL/OBSOLETE PROGRAMS, AND ESTABLISHING PROGRAM AND  
BUDGET PRIORITIES WILL NOT QUICKLY EMERGE FROM WITHIN THE UN  
SECRETARUAT. IT IS ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT, THEREFORE, THAT  
THE DEPARTMENT AND USUN WORKING TOGETHER, NOW MAKE A SERIOUS  
AND REALLY COMPREHENSIVE ATTEMPT IN PREPARATION FOR THE  
32ND UNGA TO IDENTIFY UN PROGRAMS WHICH CAN BE CUT BACK AND/  
OR ELIMINATED. IF IN TURN WE ARE THEN ABLE TO MAKE BOTH PRI-  
VATE AND PUBLIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUCH CUTBACKS, SOME MAY  
EVENTUALLY BE ACHIEVED; IF NOT WE WILL BE IN A BETTER POSITION  
TO COME DOWN HARD AGAINST FUTURE BUDGET PROPOSALS.  
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